

Message Text

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ORIGIN DPW-01

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DOD/ISA - DR. SHIELDS

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P R 112316Z SEP 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SAIGON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

FPJMT SAIGON PRIORITY

INFO COMUSSAGE THAILAND

JCRC NKP THAILAND

CINCPAC

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STATE/DEFENSE MESSAGE

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:MOPS, PFOR, LA, VN, TH

SUBJECT: THAI POW'S HELD IN NORTH VIETNAM

1. AMERICAN POW RETURNEES FROM NORTH VIETNAM IN RECENT DAYS
HAVE REAFFIRMED THEIR URGENT CONCERN ABOUT FATE OF TWO THAI
PERSONNEL HELD WITH THEM IN HOA LO PRISON, HANOI, PRIOR TO
THEIR RELEASE IN 1973. ONE OF THE THAI, CHAI CHARN HARNA-
VEE, WAS IN AIRCRAFT WITH US CIVILIAN ERNEST C. BRACE,
EMPLOYED BY BIRD AND SON, DOWNED AT SAYABOURY, NORTHERN
LAOS, MAY 2L, 1965. AMERICAN POW'S FORMED CLOSE TIES WITH
HARNAVEE IN CAPTIVITY AND ARE DISTRESSED AT TOTAL LACK OF
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WORD ON HIM SINCE THEIR RELEASE. OTHER THAI, WANG CHOM

NAPADOM, WAS HELD WITH US PRISONERS DURING FINAL DAYS OF DETENTION, AND CONCERN IS FELT ALSO ABOUT HIM.

2. WE HAVE HOPED THAT THESE TWO THAI WOULD BE INCLUDED AMONG THE THAI VOLUNTEERS WHOSE RELEASE IS EXPECTED ON OR ABOUT SEPTEMBER 19, UNDER ARRANGEMENTS ANNOUNCED BY THE COALITION GOVERNMENT IN VIENTIANE. HOWEVER, THERE IS NO INDICATION OF THIS, AND LISTS OF NAMES OF THOSE TO BE RELEASED ARE NOT EXPECTED BEFORE SEPTEMBER 17 AT THE EARLIEST.

3. WE RECALL USDEL TO FPJMT HAS INCLUDED THESE TWO THAI IN PAST INQUIRIES TO DRV OFFICIALS, WITH NIL RESPONSE. WE DO NOT KNOW IF RTG AUTHORITIES EVER RAISED THIS WITH DRV.

4. PURPOSE OF THIS MESSAGE IS TO RAISE POSSIBILITY OF NEW APPROACH NOW TO COMMUNIST SIDE ON BEHALF OF THESE TWO, TO EXPRESS ON BEHALF OF US POW RETURNEES OUR EXPECTATION AND HOPE THAT CHAI CHARN AND WANG CHOM WILL BE INCLUDED WITH PRISONERS TO BE RELEASED IN LAOS. APPEARS SUCH AN APPROACH COULD BE MADE TO LPF SIDE OFFICIALS IN VIENTIANE, OR INFORMALLY (E.G. DURING LIAISON FLIGHT) TO DRV OFFICIALS ON FPJMT.

5. ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE TO TAKE NO ACTION FOR TIME BEING, WITH HOPE THAT THESE TWO WILL BE AMONG THOSE TO BE RELEASED SEPT. 19.

6. REQUEST ADDRESSEES COMMENTS BY RETURN CABLE ON ADVISABILITY OF USG APPROACH TO COMMUNIST SIDE ON THIS SUBJECT. BANGKOK COULD COMMENT SPECIFICALLY ON RTG PROBABLE ATTITUDE, AND POSSIBILITY OF THAI APPROACH. KISSINGER

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